



Commons Board Meeting Minutes
February 13th, 2013

The Commons Board met on Wednesday, February 13th, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. (EST) in the Xenia S. Miller Room at The Commons. Board Members present: Ryan Brand, Cheryl Buffo, George Dutro, Paige Harden, Tracey Souza and Sherry Stark

Others present: Jamie Brinegar, John Clark, Susan Fye, Jillian Keller, Steve Risting, Steve Sanders, Ben Wagner, Lisa Westenberger and City Attorney Kelly Benjamin

Sherry Stark requested an approval of the minutes from January 9th, 2013. Ryan Brand motioned to approve. Cheryl Buffo seconded. Motion approved.

Sherry reported Kelly Benjamin held two executive meetings with the Commons Board since the last Board Meeting regarding potential lease litigation. No outside guests were invited. No action was taken at the meetings.

Steve Risting updated on the architectural report. He reported the Cummins office building will be implementing the two doors through the food court and terrace within the next month. Steve also reported that doors are being added to the lower level service corridor to allow access for maintenance and food court businesses. Card readers will be added for Cummins access where needed. This will allow for Cummins and Commons operations to both work simultaneously.

Steve did not have a status update in terms of the receiving dock.

Steve also reported that Jackson St. is currently being used as a construction zone. The contractor will have to go through the Board of Works in order to get permission to use the construction zone. Steve mentioned the Cummins building exterior completion is scheduled for May. Occupancy will take place as each floor is completed but is also not expected to be complete until May.

Steve Risting and Lisa Westenberger reported on the capital improvements for the Commons. These improvements included:

1. Performance Hall sun control - Steve proposed motorized roller shades for East wall and skylight. This would include sixteen shades for the wall and four for the skylight. Quotes have been obtained. Steve's estimate for the shades is \$143,000. Different shading options were discussed concerning controls, black out options and architectural elements.
2. Lower Lobby sound system - The quote Lisa Westenberger received from ClearSound was \$14,000 for a lower lobby sound system. Steve stated a contingency needs to be added for additional speakers that were not originally including. He requested the additional speakers be recessed into the walls along with mobile speakers.

3. Outdoor terrace - Steve proposed two large cantilever umbrellas that are 16' square for the patio. He felt 4 sets of seating would fit under each umbrella totaling 32 chairs and 8 tables. Multiple furniture and umbrella options are being considered based on public use of the space, price and longevity of the product. Lisa Westenberger stated the need for flexibility; furniture that is usable for both rented events and casual impromptu use for the public. The Board expressed several concerns with the suggested options for the terrace including the current view no longer being visible, (with the suggested umbrellas), seasonal use and access. The Board agreed that additional information would be necessary in determining the best choice for shade for the terrace, Steve will follow up with options including umbrellas that are not permanent and furniture that will allow storage and seasonal flexibility.
4. Outdoor Safety Bollards at the corner of 3rd and Washington - Two bollards were omitted in original design due to the plan of signage being placed in front of The Commons. The Board holds safety as the highest concern in determining options for the remaining open space. There are not safety requirements for the missing bollards. The price quote Steve Risting received from Dunlap to add two bollards in the space was \$25,000. The second option he had quoted was to move two existing bollards from 3rd Street into the space. The price quote was \$18,000. Options were discussed for a sculpture with a concrete base or moving existing elements such as planters into the space. The Board consensus was to install two new bollards into the space.

The Board agreed that all four concerns will be revisited at the next board meeting with alternative options being submitted for the outdoor terrace. The Board hopes to make a decision based on highest priority improvements at the March Board meeting and submit them to Heritage Fund for possible funding.

The Board agreed that all four projects will be revisited at the next board meeting with alternative options being submitted for the outdoor terrace. Sherry Stark suggested that when the capital improvements are approved that the financial needs be submitted as one request to Heritage Fund.

Steve Sanders stated a concern with the ability to adjust the house lighting in the Performance Hall. Lisa Westenberger has not identified it as a priority over the current capital improvements. George Dutro requested a scope of the issue with dimmable lights. Lisa Westenberger agreed to speak with the technical staff to obtain further information.

Kelly Benjamin stated there is no update of the easement report.

Lisa Westenberger submitted The Commons annual report for 2012. The budget for rental revenue was \$95,000. The actual rental revenue was just under \$144,000, exceeding the rental goal by 52%.

The lease revenue was budgeted at \$130,000. The actual revenue was just over \$80,000. This is due to the transition of CDI as well as a delay in the food court opening by several months.

The expense budget was exceeded by \$5,000., \$237,000 is in the capital non-reverting budget.

Jamie Brinegar reported that in terms of energy efficiency, if the restaurants' usage is not included (they are metered separately), the building's usage is under budget.

Lisa reported that The Commons received 365 inquiries in 2012. The inquiries that did not involve renting a space included basic questions about The Commons such as hours or location (15%). 37% of the inquiries booked an event at The Commons. 48% did not book a rental at The Commons.

The Xenia Miller conference room hosted 393 meetings in 2012. The space utilized the most after the Xenia Miller room is the Nugent-Custer Performance Hall.

Event types were also broken down by ticketed events, private events and free events. Private events made up 59% of the bookings, free events made up 22% and ticketed events were 19% of the total events booked.

Karen Shrode reported the Arts Council's update. She stated that out of the 30 free events hosted at The Commons in 2012, the Columbus Area Arts Council produced 10 of them.

The Arts Council is also partnering with The Commons and YES Cinema to bring a documentary about Thomas Luckey to Yes Cinema on March 5th and 6th. Steve Risting and Ethan Crough, the Bartholomew Consolidated School Foundation Executive Director, will speak at the event on the 5th. The event is free and donations will be accepted on behalf of the Arts Council's work with the Very Special Arts Festival in April.

Karen reported that 650 people were present for the Martin Luther King Day presentation of the Rosa Parks story. It will be a yearly event. The First Friday event for February was the Rumpelstiltskin presentation and 400 people attended. "Bongo Boy" will be the March First Friday presentation.

Karen also reported that the 4th Street grand opening is tentatively scheduled for April 19th, 2013.

Several Board members had been contacted concerning the Dancing DJ's pricing for renting the Performance Hall after hours. The event runs several hours past normal operating hours for The Commons. The Board requested that Lisa Westenberger and Jamie Brinegar submit information on the scope of the expense/revenue requirements for after-hour usage of the space.

Sherry Stark announced she would not be present for the March Board meeting scheduled for March 13th and requested Vice President Cheryl Buffo run the meeting. She agreed. Kelly Benjamin also stated she would be absent and requested to be removed from the March agenda but will submit an easement report prior to the meeting via email.

Ben Wagner reported the Mayor's request to offer The Commons to more free rental events. He stated he will share the 2012 report with the Mayor. Ben wanted The Board to be aware that the discussion may come up in the future.

Meeting adjourned.

Acting Secretary, Jillian Keller

2013 Meeting Dates:

January 9th, February 13th, March 13th, April 10th, May 8th, June 12th, July 10th, August 14th, September 11th, October 9th, November 13th

Note: No December Meeting

